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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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LAND WITHDRAWAL PROVIDES ACCESS TO FISHING AREA

Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay announced today the withdrawal of 40 acres of public land in central Oregon for use of the Oregon State Game Commission in connection with the Ochoco Reservoir Public Fishing Area.

The land will be used to provide permanent public access to the reservoir for fishing purposes. An area for parking and camping will also be established.

This withdrawal is in line with the Department of the Interior's policy to expand and increase available areas for the protection of wildlife, Secretary McKay said.

Authority for the withdrawal is provided under the Coordination Act of August 14, 1946, which calls for cooperation among Federal, State, and other agencies in developing a nationwide program of wildlife conservation and rehabilitation.

The land withdrawn is part of one of Oregon's Federal Aid in Fish Restoration projects, and lies along the Ochoco Reservoir in the Deschutes River watershed.

The Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the Federal Aid in Fish and Wildlife Restoration programs, has worked out a cooperative agreement with the State of Oregon covering the use of the withdrawn lands.

The Ochoco Reservoir was constructed about 1930 on Ochoco Creek but did not develop into a favorable fishing habitat until 1945 because of flooded vegetation. Trout productivity declined meantime and trash fish and spiny-ray populations were greatly increased. In 1951 the impoundment was treated with rotenone to eliminate these trash fish. A year later it was restocked and since then excellent trout fishing has developed. The problem of guaranteeing public access to this valuable recreation area, where so much of the land bordering the reservoir is in private ownership, resulted in the request by the Fish and Wildlife Service to the Bureau of Land Management for the land withdrawal.

A 30-day waiting period was provided during which written comments or objections could be submitted to the Bureau of Land Management on the basis of which a determination was made as to the necessity of a public hearing. No protests were received.

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